

## Fair Isle Ferry - Application to UK Government Levelling Up Fund – Round 2

Fair Isle is in the unique position of seeing recent investment and infrastructure projects from the delivery of 24 hour power to Scottish Water investment in a new water treatment plant to fibre optic cable installation due imminently. This investment in Fair Isle now needs to be secured with the delivery of a new ferry. We believe this will act as the catalyst for further investment, community and business development, and population growth.

A new Ro-Ro vessel with associated infrastructure works at both Fair Isle and Grutness is seen as vital to the Fair Isle community.

The ageing nature of the current vessel, and the increasing difficulties that presents, heightens the need for a new ferry able to deliver a robust, reliable and flexible service. That is not to say that our current ferry hasn't served us well over many years but the vessel no longer meets the needs of islanders, local businesses, contractors, and island visitors.

The introduction of a Ro-Ro service will greatly improve accessibility for passengers especially those with limited mobility and those currently unable to use Good Shepherd IV. Passenger areas and the overall comfort of passengers on a new purpose built vessel will be significantly improved and appreciated. This equally applies to our ferry crew, as technology, equipment, space and facilities will undoubtedly enhance working conditions and crew comfort.

Tourism is important to the island economy and we want to see an expansion to the industry. With the next Fair Isle Bird Observatory & Guest House due for construction this year we want to encourage and welcome returning and new visitors to Fair Isle. Tourism related businesses will benefit whether they offer B&B, Fair Isle knitwear, textile workshops or island experiences, as will the island Shop & PO. There are increasing opportunities for wildlife tourism as Fair Isle is now a designated Marine Protected Area. Having a new ferry with options for an increased level of service and availability, alongside improved comfort and vehicle access will make travel by ferry more attractive to visitors.

A new ferry will offer a shorter travel time (a great relief for many). That, and greater flexibility of service will open up opportunities for islander travel to and from mainland Shetland to spend time on activities or training or a social event not available to Fair Isle. The prospect that our High School pupils may be able to come home at weekends with a faster flexible service could be a game changer for families living here or those planning a move to Fair Isle.

Greater cargo capacity, both in and out of Fair Isle, will support local building firms and outside contractors transporting materials and plant equipment. Transportation of crofting/farming machinery, and in particular tractors, will become a reality. A new ferry would improve animal welfare when shipping livestock to market. Cars will no longer be slung on & off by crane and bulk scrap for disposal or recycling will become more manageable. The improved reliability of a new ferry will increase confidence in the service and reduce the stress, anxiety and cost caused by delays and disruption.

Shetland Islands Council, and its officers, have done a huge amount of work to prepare the 'Levelling Up Fund' application. The Fair Isle community, alongside Dunrossness Community Council members, welcome the application and support the Shetland Islands Council as they move the new ferry project forward. The Fair Isle Community are happy to offer further assistance, information, answer questions and engage at any point to achieve a successful outcome.

Fiona Mitchell  
Dunrossness Community Council Chair  
Fair Isle

David Parnaby  
Fair Isle Community Committee & Association Chair  
Fair Isle

23/06/2022

